

November, 2004

Dear Praying Friends And Supporters:

This been a time of transition for the MTW Missionaries in Ecuador – both organizationally and in the area of “what ministry looks like.”

With input from our Area Director, we have decided to reorganize our two Ecuador fields – Quito and Guayaquil – into one country-wide team with this vision: “To see the Reformation take root and grow in Ecuador through the multiplication of Christians and churches having a Reformed and covenantal world and life view.” We have developed “ministry focuses” that will guide us to our vision through this mission: “To promote healthy churches.” We will be working together using complementary strategies and shared resources. The new Ecuador Team will become an official reality on January 1st of 2005.

Our new team is organized under three sub-teams, each with distinct, but complementary areas of ministry. The first sub-team will focus on **Church Revitalization**. A key member of that sub-team is Christian Troya, an Ecuadorian pastor who has “grown up” under the mentoring of our team. He will lead in training and discipling members and future leaders within our own church plants.

A second sub-team will focus on **Theological Education** in both the mountain and coastal areas. There are hundreds of small churches scattered throughout the environs of Quito and Guayaquil that are pastored by men who, for various reasons, have not been able to acquire formal training in Bible and Theology. Many of these churches are indigenous; their members are Quichua. We want open the door of opportunity for these pastors and church leaders by offering courses that have only minimal cost and no requirement of previous academic success. For the Reformation to take root and grow in Ecuador, these are churches that must be reached.

Our Quito teammates have been preparing a “Quichua Training Center” which is almost ready to go. Here on the coast, one of our indigenous churches, Iglesia Betania (Bethany Church) wants us to use their facilities. Betania is strategically located in the center of Duran, a predominately ethnic city of 400,000 located just across the river from Guayaquil. To create interest and promote their presence, the Quito churches are inviting area pastors to a Grace seminar. We hope to do the same thing here, perhaps in January or February.

Our third sub-team, **Community Development**, will focus on church growth by equipping and motivating local churches and their members to offer ministries which will promote healthy families, strong communities, and economic opportunities. Various components include literacy and vocational skills, crisis pregnancy counseling, small business development, savings programs, and savings and loan groups. Most of these programs are designed to be implemented in and run by the local churches to reach their communities for Christ.

How will we connect the three sub-teams? We are already working in Community Development - type ministries; some parts are being done in Quito, others in Guayaquil. We hope to expand them by reaching into a growing number of local churches through the different church leaders who take advantage of our Theological Education. We will connect our Church Revitalization resources to the churches that same way, making available to them all of our disciple-making and Bible study materials.

Well, now that you have a pretty good idea of what is going on, please let me leave you several items of prayer.

1. Please pray for God's grace and energy to implement our plan! Pray for ME, especially, as I try to organize things and get ready to begin offering theological education to pastors.
2. Please continue to pray for Peg and me as a couple. There are some little ministry things that Peg does, and that we do together, that we hope to be able to continue doing.
3. Please pray for our new national team members, Ramiro Araujo and Christian Troya, who need to raise Missionary support among our churches in the USA.
4. Please pray for me to be a better and more-frequent communicator to you folks!

Thanks again for praying for the Smiths!

In Christ's love,

Ron, Peg, Benjamin and Allison